

# Resolution

No. 23-200

## EXTENDING CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF THE LATE ERNEST "ERNIE" REZENTS

WHEREAS, Ernest "Ernie" Rezens, one of the most respected arborists in the history of Hawai'i, passed away on June 13, 2023, at the age of 91, in Wailuku, surrounded by his family; and

WHEREAS, Ernie was born on January 17, 1932, at Maui's Pu'unēnē Hospital to Ernest and Victoria Rezens and was raised in Pu'uohala Village in Waiehu; and

WHEREAS, Ernie graduated from St. Anthony School in Wailuku in 1950 and began attending the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to study secondary education; and

WHEREAS, Ernie's first teaching job was in Honoka'a, Hawai'i Island, where he met Alene Humphries, the love of his life; and

WHEREAS, Ernie and Alene married in 1958 and purchased a home in Makawao, where the couple raised five children, cultivated an urban forest, and established a gathering place for their 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, in 1960, Ernie began teaching at Maui Technical School, now known as the University of Hawai'i Maui College, starting a career that spanned for more than 50 years in which he taught courses such as "All About Trees"; and

WHEREAS, Ernie returned to school to major in biology at the University of Oregon and took courses in horticulture at the University of California, Davis, developing respect for and expertise in trees; and

WHEREAS, after returning home, Ernie was instrumental in establishing the University of Hawai'i Maui College's Agricultural Careers program and successfully lobbied the State for funding to construct a classroom and greenhouse facility to teach horticulture, arboriculture, and other plant-management courses; and

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WHEREAS, Ernie explained his love of trees to Maui Green & Beautiful last year: “Trees provide us with fruit, flowers, shade, and numerous environmental benefits”; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, Ernie drafted the first Maui County Planting Plan, a 179-page document to advise the County on how to care for its street and park trees and to identify exceptional trees; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, Ernie researched, wrote, and coordinated the current Third Edition of the Maui County Planting Plan, a 243-page guide for caring, pruning, planting, replanting, removing, and preserving trees and other plants in the County, with maps prepared by his friend and forester Bob Hobdy; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, Ernie was recognized by the International Society of Arboriculture for his outstanding performance as a teacher and advocate and was honored as only one of three in the world to receive the “True Professional of Arboriculture” award; and

WHEREAS, Ernie was a long-time advocate for protecting the Lāhainā Banyan Tree, which he regarded as a living treasure, noting it as one of the County’s most valuable assets; and

WHEREAS, Ernie’s tree-care philosophy was simple: “Treat trees as you want to be treated; they will reward you with benefits you could not find elsewhere”; now, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the County of Maui:

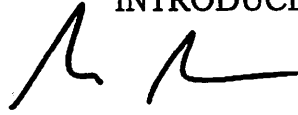
1. That it extends its condolences and deepest sympathy to the friends and family of the late Ernest “Ernie” Rezents;
2. That it expresses its gratitude to Ernie for his dedication to sharing his knowledge of tree care and promoting arboriculture in the County of Maui; and
3. That certified copies of this resolution be transmitted to Ernie’s children, David James Rezents, Diana Lee Fain, Kathryn Rezents Duffy, Laura Ann Rezents, and Judith Ellen Davies; Kenneth “Duane” Sparkman, Chair, Maui County

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Arborist Committee; and the Honorable Richard T. Bissen, Jr.,  
Mayor, County of Maui.

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INTRODUCED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of two stylized, cursive letters that appear to be 'G' and 'J'.

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GABE JOHNSON